

October 26, 2010

**MANITOBA LAUNCHES
ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD PROGRAM**

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**Funding Available
For Swift Implementation: Minister**

More Manitoba physicians will be able to make use of electronic medical records (EMR) to better manage patient information with the support of a new funding program, Health Minister Theresa Oswald announced today.

“Patients will receive faster access to better quality care with more doctors implementing electronic medical records,” said Oswald. “Together with Canada Health Infoway, we are making it easier and more affordable for family doctors to modernize their practices with electronic medical records.”

The electronic medical record is a system used within primary and specialist-care clinics to improve the management of patient information and care. EMRs contain information that is specific to the care a patient receives from a clinician or group of clinicians usually within one clinic or facility, such as diagnostic images like X-rays, prescriptions and medications, patient recalls and reminders and appointment scheduling.

“EMRs provide quick access to vital health information that is required in order to make informed care decisions,” said Richard Alvarez, president and CEO, Canada Health Infoway. “Health care, like most industries, does not look good on paper. Today’s announcement is about modernizing care in Manitoba and moving the way we track and exchange health information into the 21st century.”

Oswald made the announcement today at the annual eHealth Conference for provincial health-care providers.

“Electronic medical records will help busy physician offices and clinics to run more efficiently and improve their management of patient information,” she said.

The minister said EMRs will help patients by:

- improving the quality and safety of care in community practices,
- facilitating Connected Care by linking community practices to each other and to other providers in the health system such as emergency rooms and home-care workers, and
- providing the necessary population information to improve quality and access across the system.

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The program will reimburse eligible community physicians for up to 70 per cent of the eligible costs of purchasing and using qualified EMR products, and operating costs for the first two years.

Full details of the EMR Adoption Program will be available in November at www.manitoba-ehealth.ca.

Canada Health Infoway is an independent, not-for-profit organization funded by the federal government. Infoway jointly invests with every province and territory to accelerate the development and adoption of electronic health record projects in Canada. Fully respecting patient confidentiality, these secure systems will provide clinicians and patients with the information they need to better support safe care decisions and manage their own health. Accessing this vital information quickly will help foster a more modern and sustainable health-care system for all Canadians.